

VA #1 London Life 1

A Few Facts About Life in London in the Early 19th Century:

- London was the largest city in the Western world. In 1800, the population was over 1 million people. By 1850, the population was 2,362,000—more than double the size in 1830.
- Fifteen percent of England's population lived in London by 1851.
- Many of the Londoners were workers employed in the city's many factories.
- Factory owners liked to locate in areas near seaports so getting their products onto ships for export was easier.
- Builders constructed housing for the new workers quickly, cheaply, and often near the factories.
- The city was very crowded. Sometimes, whole families, or even several families, rented single rooms.
- Most homes had no running water or toilets. People on a street would share one outdoor pump and a couple of outdoor toilets.
- The sewage system was not adequate to handle the increase in population. Some of the sewers in the city were big open ditches that ran down the streets. The ditches drained into London's rivers and canals. Some were often in need of cleaning because they did not drain efficiently.
- People would go to the bathroom in these ditches and throw old food and trash in them. The ditches smelled terrible, especially in hot weather.

VA #2 London Life 2

- Horses and buggies were the main form of transportation within the city.
- Railroads came into wider use during the first half of the century. Railroad companies laid tracks made of iron. Steam engines powered the trains; coal ovens on board fueled the fires that produced the steam.
- Sometimes, people herded domesticated animals like cows and pigs through the city. Animals wandered the streets. Animal waste was all around.
- Building ships and homes used so much wood and depleted the forests so that the English had to import wood from other countries.
- The factories burned coal to produce steam and power the steam engines. Burning coal produces smoke and soot.
- Children often worked long hours in the factories. Conditions in the factories were often unsafe and unsanitary.

